THE BI-MONTHLY

Newsletter of the Bisexual Center

Volume 6 Number 1 January-February 1982

Better is one's own path though imperfect than the path of another well made.

COVER: Calligraphy (and sentiments) by Mary Roberts.

SPEAKER'S BUREAU

The Bi Center can provide speakers to present information on bisexuality or related topics. For information, contact Doug Friedman, via the Bi Center or at 621-3255.

DOES YOUR LABEL HAVE A RED STRIPE??

If it does, it means that your membership in the Bisexual Center has expired -- and this is the last copy of the BiMonthly you will receive. However, when you renew your membership, you will continue to receive the "Bi Monthly" and be entitled to members' rates for our various activities.

Your membership dues provide funds for keeping the Bi Center in operation as well as paying for the cost of printing and distributing our newsletter. We need your support to continue to develop a sense of community and a base of strength for bisexual people. We appreciate your concern in the past and hope that we can count on your continued support.

If you've recently renewed your membership, our letters may have crossed in the mail. If not, we look forward to hearing from you.

THE BISEXUAL CENTER

P.O. Box 26227 (415) 929-9299
San Francisco, CA 94126

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ON RELATING TO GAY PEOPLE

by Charlene Piper

One of the current issues for me concerning being a bisexual person is how to relate to gays as such.

As a child and young adult growing up, it seems, in every town on the West Coast except San Francisco, news of homosexuals was always "back alley" gossip; but I remember wondering to myself why people made such a big deal out of it. After I moved to San Francisco in my early twenties, gays began to enter my life as real people rather than rumors, but I have never had an extended personal friendship or relationship with someone who identifies as a homosexual. The gays I worked with and saw on the streets and in cafes always seemed so distant to me. As I watched my own bisexuality emerging, it never entered my mind that I wanted to be gay. But this desire to relate to and be accepted by gays persisted and has recently begun to emerge as one of the largest areas of concern to me as pertains to my political and social views. I want to see the bisexual and gay communities working as a team to educate our families, co-workers, and the public at large as to what homosexuality is, whether it be one hundred percent of a person's preference or twenty percent.

I first became aware that I wanted to relate to the gay community during the 1980 Gay/Lesbian Freedom Day Parade. As a bisexual I had always been sensitive to the least little sign of hostility from a gay person because I felt so alienated from the heterosexual world I had grown up and worked in that I wanted acceptance from gays. It was very important to me to have that acceptance from a person whose lifestyle represented the "other side" of my personality. How nervous I was! My first Parade, among tens of thousands of the people I had always struggled not to offend, tried to defend, tried to befriend -- usually unsuccessfully on all three counts. I was wary of reactions to our small but loyal group's banner proclaiming ourselves to be bisexual.

There was cool receptiveness, for the most part -- at least this is what I remember my perception as being (other of my friends from the Bi Center who marched in the Parade that day probably felt totally different reactions from the other groups marching) -- also indifference, and some lukewarm supportiveness. But what I remember most are those few individuals who jeered us (and I, being myself, took it personally to mean that they were jeering at me). It wasn't that there were hundreds of people doing this; there were only three or four individuals. It was this reaction I remember most keenly because it was the reaction I had been the most afraid of.

My life has totally changed since that day. I still don't have any gay friends (most of my friends are bisexual or bi-intimate), but I feel at home in the neighborhoods thought of as "theirs" and don't feel threatened or rejected if I'm ignored or glared at when I walk down Castro Street. At this point in my life I am re-evaluating my feelings towards the gay community, now that I am part of a growing bi community, and trying to learn what those fears of rejection from gays represented as far as my personal growth goes, and also trying to develop some sort of mental model for relating to gays because I see the need for teamwork in the political and social futures of our society.

While writing this article I came across the following entry from my journal:

> "I cannot deal with the hostility of some gays -- although sometimes it is warranted. I can deal with it but I don't feel it's productive -- same with the ignorance with which I associate straights. I don't like either label. But I don't think I'm perfect because I'm bi, and no one is 'perfectly balanced' -- certainly choice of sexual and emotional objects does not grant ultimate balance -- balance is in the individual."

(continued on page 4)

RELATING (continued from Page 3)

Also, I've been noticing lately that I find it very easy to "defend" a gay lifestyle to homophobic people but that their (the homophobic's) if any, is usually based on, "Well, 'they' are different, and have the right to be, but it's still alien to me." I am realizing that I am probably leading someone into this type of detached rationalization. I wonder if I have the nerve to say to my mother or my co-worker or the man in the grocery store, "Hey, I'm not in a gay lifestyle so I can't pretend to know how that feels, but I can tell you how the gay side of ME feels when you make a disparaging remark like that."? I'm not sure that exact phrase would work, but I think I'm on the right track to guiding myself to remind the people I deal with that gays are not "those different people over there," but that at some point or another we are all gay.

ZOE (continued from Page 5)

The story within the story of Zoe and Julia's enduring and loving relationship is fascinating. I began to recognize my own feelings around the passionate relationship with its entangling jealousies and possessiveness. I was disappointed at the lack of sexual scenery in the book, but the author's style brought my imagination into play. Without a doubt, it is hard to enjoy this book from an erotic distance; I was as involved ;in the same way as the anonymous researcher who experiences her own erotic fantasies during the course of the tale.

Zoe's Book is, on a smaller scale, like the film versions of The Magus and The French Lieutenant's Woman, imperfect as they were, but entertaining in the style of dual time frames. Zoe's Book accomplishes the transitions smoothly without lurching from past to present and back.

I have many unanswered questions about the characters in this book; we are treated to a glimpse of Julia's brother, Giles (also bisexual), but his character requires a book of its own. This book, by not becoming an epic, remains true to life, only attempting to define the power of passionate states of mind. The glimpses of intimate relationships are perhaps no more enlightening than in reality. The characters, in striving for fulfillment in fictitious lives, offer the reader perspectives to consider, but no formulas to follow.

FUGUE (continued from Page 5)

preached limitation (Ed can't have more than one lover, Laurel and Ed can't change Ed, no one can have an honest open relationship, only gays and (maybe) straights exist, etc.) rather than freedom. And I am very sensitive to anyone telling me that I cannot be free.

TO THE EDITOR

I gotta congratulate the Newsletter people this month.

The Kinsey story has real meat to it and the open letter and response had true value in expressing different viewpoints about the Bi Center. The editorial content was the best I've seen so far.

I like the use of different type faces although I consider the lower case "l" in one of the typefaces to be an aesthetic abomination -- we all have our prejudices and I'm not shy about mine.

And congrats on the business card advertisements. I hope they bring in some extra income. They also serve as a reminder that the Bi Center is composed of "real people" who live "real lives." If I still had a business I'd advertise in the Bi-Monthly, pronto!

And I like the special thanks section -- it gives credit where credit is due, creates the feeling of a truely interactive community and gives a sense of identification with "real people" who have "real names" and "really exist."

Best,
Christy Quinn

...I am a bisexual and have had a lot of trouble with straight people who feel that since I can pass as straight, I should, (I have been twice married and have three children) and from gay friends who think that I should stop hanging on to "heterosexual privilege" and live as a gay and preferably "separatist dyke" woman. Unfortunately, when I try to do either, I feel as if I were only half there. Gay friends who would not agree to allowing me to "repress my homosexual tendencies" are willing and eager for me to repress my latent heterosexuality.

I am eager to know if a place actually exists where I can be myself -- ALL of myself.

M.B.

CRITIQUE:

"FUGUE IN A NURSERY"

BY TOM MAPP

"Fugue in a Nursery" is the play which Theatre Rhinocerous, San Francisco's most established gay theatre company, chose to kick off its 1981-82 season. I found much to admire about the production. Fine acting and firm direction helped the play move along at a brisk pace and brought out the humor in the play's text. However, I found fault with the play itself.

Playwright Harvey Fierstein presents four people in two couples. Ed and Laurel are a liberal young couple who invite Arnold, a drag queen by profession and Ed's former lover, to their farm for a weekend. Arnold brings Alan, his new young lover, to the farm with him. Arnold is clearly the playwright's (and, soon, the audience's) favorite. He is given the wittiest lines and he appears closest to seeing reality as it is.

I left the theatre with an uncomfortable feeling, and it took some analysis to discover why. The play builds a reality for us in order to have something to laugh at. Unfortunately, in this reality, bisexuals do not exist.

At one point, Arnold tells Alan how he had mercilessly quoted statistics to Laurel, proving to her that Ed must return to homosexuality, that bisexuality cannot endure. Further, both couples' attempts at honest open relationships prove so painful and destructive that the viewer is left with the inference that such arrangements are unreasonable if not absurd or just impossible. The playwright plays upon Laurel and Ed by making them appear ridiculous because they refuse to accept reality. In this case, however, Fierstein's reality is something different from my reality, since I know bisexuals and open relationships can exist.

"Fugue in a Nursery" can be interpreted as a cheap shot from a representative of the gay community toward bisexuals. Perhaps Fierstein simply does not understand bisexuals (just as I do not understand drag queens).

What might be a light comedy to gay audiences appeared insidious to me. It

continued on Page 4

BOOK REVIEW:

Zoe's Book, by Gail Pass

Reviewed by Gail Nicholson

It would be helpful to the reader of Zoe's Book to have some familiarity with the literary greats who are identified with the Bloomsbury district of England during the twenties and thirties, though not necessary to enjoy the complexities of their lives. Theirs was a circle within the upper class, a privileged circle of those times, intellectuals, artists, and writers whose work reflected their introspective lifestyles. These lifestyles included a practiced bisexuality among intimate peers. Leonard and Virginia Woolf, Vita Sackville-West, Katherine Mansfield, Gertrude Stein, and Alice B. Toklas are not carefully introduced to the reader of Zoe's Book, but because they set the mood of the story and are not the substance, they will likely direct the reader to further explore diaries, biographies and novels about this extraordinary collection of people.

Zoe Mohr, an octogenarian bordering on a grandiose fantasy life, or an intimate of the "Bloomsberries?" Her story adds two unknown characters to a group whose members were well documented. Whether or not Zoe is telling the truth about herself and an unknown writer, Julia Carrol, becomes immaterial to the Ph.D. candidate who becomes captivated by the story. She drops her dissertation research on D.H. Lawrence (of Lady Chatterly's Lover fame) to become the "reader" of the book Zoe is determined to bring forth. In a neat twist by the author, we are drawn into a hall of mirrors with the telling of the story, the unnamed researcher listening to Zoe talk of her life with Julia, creating flashbacks to Julia and Zoe's relationship, without ever losing the presence of the researcher. Seduced by the story, it becomes part of her life, everything revolves around her sessions in Zoe's drawing room. She barely participates, only occasionally interjecting her doubts about the authenticity of the tale, or offering an expression of recognition at the emotional scenes she is directed to see by Zoe.

continued on Page 4

How to be a CONSERVATIVE

by Dean Sandler

It is a point of contention at many a Bi Center discussion as to the validity and necessity of labels. I would like to examine the seeming anomaly of being labeled both a bisexual and a conservative. Most of us feel we are liberals, possibly as a recognition of our sexual permissiveness or as a reaction to the "Moral Majority." Since I feel the term "bisexual" or "bisexuality" should be intimately defined, allow me to grapple only with the label "conservative."

Because conservatism is defined as a desire to maintain the status quo or to return to the "good old days," we may be able to get a handle on it by flashing back to eighteenth century Western Europe. It was a monarchical world where the rights of the individual person were sacrificed for the good of the state. The state was embodied in the King and his court who owned all of the land and made all of the laws. (While the definition of "state" is different, this is also true of present-day Communist/-Socialist and Fascist systems. I will call this anti-individual orientation by its generic name -- socialism.) Hard-working Europeans like the shopkeeper, farmer, and tradesperson were enslaved in the same status and lack of rights as any ne'er-do-well, simply because he or she was not of royal blood.

As these industrious Europeans gained wealth and education, they turned to a revolutionary philosophy which broke from this frustrating status quo. The new radicals were called Libertarians and their prophets were Adam Smith, John Locke. and Thomas Jefferson. These men wrote of a classless, democratic society where the individual would be able to reap all of the rewards of his or her efforts. These rewards would in turn make the individual work harder, and the society in general would be benefitted. The first battle fought in the name of individualism was the American Revolution in 1776. It was led by middle-class businessmen in order to set up a government which would protect their individual quests for wealth and power. These businessmen, who instigated rebellion against taxation and government regulation, were the liberals and radicals of their time.

In 1981, doesn't this historical labeling seem awry, if not reversed? The socialists. people who feel the state should dominate, are now considered the liberals and radicals, while the individualists are identified as conservatives or reactionaries. What this should all mean to a bisexual is that all of this political labeling of today, e.g., "New Right," "Reaganism," "conservative," "liberal," should be ignored. Do not be scared of conservative politics! It holds wonderful freedom and security for the bisexual. Remember that in its pure form, Libertarianism, it is the means by which an individual has a right. a protected and unalienable right, to be his or herself. The conservatism of Reagan and the "Moral Majority" is, at its best, unpure. It is truly a "going back to the good old days," but to them the good old days are a mixture of Adam Smith's free market and the Salem witch trials.

Today's attempt at combining Libertarian economics with conformist morality has inherited the label "conservative." This is why the leading contemporary spokesperson for individual rights, and author of **Freedom to Choose**, Milton Friedman, will never accept a governmental post with the present administration. While Reagan and Friedman believe in the soundness of business de-regulation and the abolition of the welfare system, Friedman takes the Libertarian philosophy to all of its logical applications. He tells us that

heroin-users, non-heterosexuals, and women who wish to have abortions, should all be legally protected, because the right of the individual should not be obstructed if it does not hurt others. Isn't it strange then, that Milton Friedman and Ronald Reagan are both labeled conservatives, just because they agree on certain economic policies? Perhaps not. because if a bisexual agrees with these same policies, he or she can label him or herself a conservative too!

EDITOR'S NOTE

One of the functions of the Bi-Monthly is to present the views of the members of The Bisexual Center for discussion. We welcome responses from our readers (members and other interested people) to any of the articles in this—or any other--issue.

ADVERTISEMENTS

Below is a business card from one of our members. Reproductions of business cards in the Bi-Monthly are $5.00 per card. Other ads cost $1.00 per line. Advertisements can be business announcements, offers to sell or buy items, etc. We cannot accept "personal" (relationship) ads.

L-6915

CHARLES MOSER, Ph.D.

LICENSED CLINICAL SOCIAL WORKER
SEXOLOGIST

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ALTERNATIVE RELATIONSHIPS IN THE 80'S

An evening with Barry Kohn (co-author of Barry and Alice, Portrait of a Bisexual Marriage.

The influence of the Women's Movement and the Gay Rights Movement, a huge increase in divorces and the number of single persons, and a continuing change in the roles of men and women have opened a wider range of options for relationships. The traditional family -- husband, wife, 2.2 children -- is, in reality, a minority lifestyle today. While this shift in values and expectations presents many problems for people, it can also create unique opportunities for forming new kinds of relationships.

Barry Kohn, attorney, counselor and co-author of the book Barry and Alice, Portrait of a Bisexual Marriage (Prentice-Hall, 1980), will speak about his own experience and the work he has been doing with people across the United States. A number of topics will be explored including: independence within a long-term relationship, dealing with jealousy, developing trust, and how a third person fits into a relationship. He will also discuss some practical guidelines on scheduling of time, raising children within this new concept of personal values, and the importance of creating support for your particular lifestyle. He will also show a one-hour documentary, and will be available to answer questions from the audience.

Date: Sunday, February 14
Time: 7:00 - 10:00 p.m.
Place: The Bi Center
Donation: $5.00

Barry Kohn can be reached at the following address for further information:

Barry Kohn
2523 Raven Drive
Sullivan's Island, SC 29482
(803) 883-9076

JEWELS FOR 1982

BY J.T.

RESOLUTION #1:
DON'T THINK ABOUT IT.

RESOLUTION #2:
DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT.

RESOLUTION #3:
BE IT.

BI SOCIETY PAGE

VALENTINES DAY PARTY

Five years ago, on Valentine's Day, the Bisexual Center had its first major event. Since then, we've claimed Valentine's Day as our special holiday and have had magnificent parties to celebrate it. Our sixth annual Valentine's Day party will be held at the Bi Center and will be the most festive to date. Get out your best party clothes and join us. Bring munchies to go with our champagne punch!

Date: Saturday, February 13
Time: 9 p.m.
Place: The Bi Center
Donation: $5.00 -- Members
$7.00 -- Nonmembers

WOMEN-ONLY BAR HOP

We're meeting at the Bi Center for an evening of bar hopping. The women's rap group will be deciding on the places, so if you want a say in where we will be going, be sure to come to a women's rap group.

Date: Friday, January 29
Time: 8:30 p.m.
Place: The Bi Center

WINE AND CHEESE NIGHT

Bring your favorite wine or cheese to an evening with friends. This event is for members only.

Date: Saturday, February 27
Time: 8 p.m.
Place: The Bi Center
Donation: $3.00

BRIDGE NIGHT

Frustrated because you can't find friendly rubber bridge players. Are you just aching to trump that opponent's ace? The Bi Center to the rescue!

The Bi Center will sponsor an evening of contract party bridge:

Date: Friday, February 5
Time: 7:30 p.m.
Place: The Bi Center

Contact Tom Mapp at 681-7563 for more information.

POT LUCK

A pot luck is the perfect way to start out the new year with friends. Bring your exciting new recipe to this pot luck to share with others. This event is for members only.

Date: Saturday, January 23
Time: 7 p.m.
Place: The Bi Center
Donation: $3.00

PHONES

The Bi Center exists for you and because of you. The impact we have on the country and our city neighbors is directly proportionate to the energy we invest.

When someone calls and never receives an answer, it affects the integrity of our organization.

Now you can help! We need people to answer the messages on the tape machine daily between 5:00 and 7:00 p.m.

We have three people now, and wish to thank them:

Charlene (Wednesday night)
John (Monday night)
Ray (Thursday night)

The rest of the week is open, folks! If you want to sign up for a night, please contact Ray at 929-9299, or leave your number and I will call you.

CROSS-COUNTRY SKI TRIP

I am trying to organize a BiCenter cross-country skiing trip in Yosemite some weekend in late January or early February, provided there is enough interest. Equipment can be rented at Yosemite and a day of ski instruction is available for those who feel they need it. Accommodations would most likely be in tent cabins. Transportation would be by car pool. For further information call Clint at 386-3088.

BOARD MEETINGS

The next two meetings of the Board of Directors of the Bi Center will be held on Monday, January 11 and Monday, February 8, at the Bi Center, at 7:30 p.m. Board meetings are open to members of the Bi Center.

Groups & Workshops

COMING OUT BI

The process of coming out can be an exhilarating and rewarding experience. It can also be painful, lonely, and confusing. A lot of what happens to you depends upon the support systems you develop and the kind of clearing and grounding you get.

Drs. Marilyn King and David Lourea, who have been leading the Tuesday and Wednesday rap groups for the past three years, have put together a multimedia workshop on coming out that is powerful, dynamic, and consciousness-raising. It is for people who are beginning to discover their bisexuality and for those who could use some help in examining some of the mythology about being bi, finding creative ways of developing support systems, and taking a look at the issues concerning homophobia and heterosexism. It will also be a time, cause, and place to celebrate.

Date: Saturday, February 6
Time: 9:30 a.m. - 6 p.m.
Place: The Bi Center
Donation: $30.00 for Bi Center members
$35.00 for nonmembers

Preregistration by January 30 is essential. To preregister, send your name, address, and phone number to David Lourea, 1757 Hayes St., San Francisco, CA 94117.

BISEXUAL MEN'S SUPPORT GROUP

As men, we have been conditioned to look to women for our caring, nurturing and emotional support. David Lourea, D.Ed., and Scott Eaton will be facilitating a six-week bi men's support group that will explore verbal and non-verbal ways to trust and depend on other men for the satisfaction of emotional needs we've been told can only be given by women. The group will meet on Monday evenings.

Starting Date: Monday, January 25
Time: 6:30 - 8:30 p.m.
Cost: $50.00

Preregistration is essential, since the size of the group will be limited. Call the Bi Center, or drop in, to sign up for the group.

WOMEN'S RAP GROUP

The ongoing Women's Group meets at the Bi Center on the first and third Monday of each month, at 7:30 p.m. It is open to all interested women. We ask for a $3.00 donation.

TUESDAY AND WEDNESDAY NIGHT RAP GROUPS

The Bi Center has drop-in rap groups on Tuesday and Wednesday nights, open to all interested people. The rap groups are a good way to find out what the Center offers and to exchange ideas on sexuality, relationships and other subjects. They start at 7:30 p.m. and run until 10:00 p.m. Please be on time. We ask for a $3.00 donation to help support the work of the Center.

BI PARTNER'S SUPPORT GROUP

Being the straight. gay, or bi partner of a bisexual woman or man can be particularly confusing and frightening. It often seems as if you are constantly being told to beware of your partner because s/he can't possibly make a commitment, or that s/he is sure to leave you for someone of the sex that you are not.

The Bi Center will be forming a support group for the partners of bi women and men to look at the myths surrounding bisexuality, to confront fears, anger, and jealousy, and to explore and create new options and images for making your relationships work. The group will last for six Wednesday evenings.

Starting Date: Wednesday, January 27
Time: 7:00 - 9:00 p.m.
Cost: $50.00

Preregistration is essential, since the size of the group will be limited. Call the Bi Center, or drop in, to sign up for the group.

Community Bulletin Board

SPECIAL THANKS

- To Dane, for the photographs of people and scenes at the last Gay and Lesbian Freedom Day Parade and Celebration, copies of which were sold to benefit the Bi Center.
- To the Sutro Baths. for their donation (from their "Wishing Well") of over $17.00 to the Bi Center.
- To Ray, for all his help during the Thanksgiving Dinner and the Wine and Cheese Night -- his support was invaluable.

T-SHIRTS

Some of our "official" Bi Center T-shirts are still available. They have the Center's logo and name on the chest, and come in three styles: red on white (standard cut); chocolate on tan (standard cut); and chocolate on cream (French cut). We're asking $7.00 per T-shirt (the profit goes to support tne Center). If you want one mailed, please add $1.00 to your check, and specify the size you want: small, medium, or large.

NEWSLETTER

We need your articles, letters, and graphics for the Bi-Monthly. All contributions must be in by the start of Layout day, to be considered for the next issue of the newsletter. The schedule for the next issue is:

Layout: Sunday, February 21 (11 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.)
Pasteup: Sunday, February 28 (11 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Also, we urgently need help in typing, cutting and pasting, setting up titles, and other jobs, especially on Pasteup day. Please drop by for an hour or two and help us out. No experience required.

BIRTHWAYS GAY PARENTING WORKSHOP

Birthways will hold a Gay Parenting Workshop on Sunday, January 24th from 7:30 to 9:30 p.m. This is a time for gay and bisexual parents and expectant parents to share information, insights, experiences, and practical advice. Fees are $3.00 for Birthways members/low income; $3.50 general. Birthways is located at 3127 Telegraph Avenue in Oakland. Call 653-7300 for more information.

BI CENTER ARTISTS

We're planning a group show for Bi Center artists this spring. Each artist should expect to:

1. enter four works;
2. limit the cost of each work to $100 (or less);
3. change one piece every other week;
4. attend an art class once every other week, rotating teaching responsibilities;
5. help with a group poster;
6. help create an announcement for the Bi-Monthly; and
7. attend an opening party.

The show will be held at the Bi Center during March and April. To sign up, contact Jim Haws, c/o The Bi Center.

HAYWARD GROUP

Anyone interested in planning or participating in educational and social activities for gay and bisexual students, faculty, and staff of Cal State-Hayward is invited to contact the newly-formed Gay Peoples Union. Call J.C. Lambert, Coordinator at 534-1001 or Gail Nicholson, Assistant Coordinator (member of The Bisexual Center) at 886-6592, or write the G.P.U. at 20993 Foothill Boulevard, Suite 325, Hayward, CA 94541.

BI-MONTHLY CALENDAR 1982

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24 / 31	25 Bi ♂'s Support Group starts.. (p.9)	26 ↘	27 ↘ Bi Partners Support Group starts (p.9)	28	29 ♀-Only Bar Hop (p.8)	30

	1 ♀'s Group	2 ↘	3 ↘	4	5 Bridge Night (p.8)	6 Coming Out Bi (p.9)
7	8 Bi Center Board Meeting (p.8)	9 ↘	10 ↘	11	12	13 Valentines Day Party B (p.8)
14 An Evening with Barry Kohn (p.7)	15 ♀'s Group	16 ↘	17 ↘	18	19	20
21 Layout (p.10)	22	23 ↘	24 ↘	25	26	27 Wine & Cheese Night (p.8)
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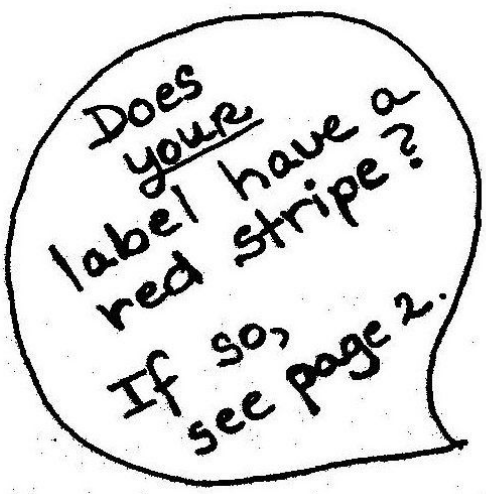

TO:

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